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ABSTRACT

Book II of a 5-book day camp manual focuses on staff selection and training. Following the philosophy that developing an effective staff is the responsibility of the camp director, the book contains major sections on staff recruitment (sources of staff, problems, selection procedures, job descriptions, personnel practices); guidelines for job negotiations developed by the Ontario Camping Association (interview techniques for applicants and directors, basic aspects of interviewing, contracts); staff training (prior to camp; in camp; examples of staff training at a municipal day camp, an agency day camp, and a private day camp; counselor-in-training programs); supervision; and evaluation (purpose, practices). A reading list is included. (SB)

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day camp manual STAFF

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Ontario
Ministry of Culture and Recreation
Sports and Recreation Bureau

The material for Day Camp Manuals
was originally written and compiled by William Babcock,
Ontario Camping Association.

The 1974 revisions were prepared by
members of the Day Camp Committee, Ontario Camping Association
for Sports and Recreation Bureau
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TITLES IN THE DAY CAMP SERIES

1. Administration
2. Staff
3. The Camper
4. Program
5. A Study of Mandatory Standards
   and Desirable Practices for
   Children's Day Camps

Day Camp Manual Book II

Staff

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Introduction

Success or failure of any camp does not depend on facilities, equipment, or organization, but rather on the ability of the staff to use those tools effectively. The director establishes the philosophy and the rules and regulations under which the staff will carry out their task. But unless they are capable, enthusiastic and willing, the child will not have as full a camp experience as he might.

The day camp was first established to fill a void in the lives of children who were not able to take advantage of Ontario's beautiful north country for camping and outings.

Today, the outlook has broadened. The day camp program is geared to offer an opportunity for the child to adapt to a social situation, to learn to take full advantage of the out-of-doors, to search for answers to questions about his surroundings, to help him work cooperatively with his own peer group and to offer a solid grounding in camp crafts, to prepare him for and make him feel comfortable in a resident camp situation.

These aims can only be achieved by a staff which has been well trained and willing to give of themselves. The responsibility for developing these qualities within the staff lies with the camp director. This development may be seen as a cyclical process and may be depicted graphically as shown on the next page.

The information given on the following pages is an attempt to aid the director in achieving the required development.

Recruitment

Staff recruitment begins before the preceding summer has ended. It is important for a camp to have a solid nucleus of returning personnel to keep the camp functioning efficiently. They know the basic organization and philosophy of the camp and can, within pre-arranged limits, experiment to improve their program. This nucleus also serves to give the parents of the campers more confidence in the camp and its policies.

Recruitment depends on two factors.
Budget - It is generally agreed that a substantial budget will allow the hiring of more qualified and mature personnel. In the case of public supported organizations, volunteers may be required. The type of individual who is willing to give freely of himself often makes an excellent staff member.

Organization -This will determine
- the total number of staff required
- the number of administrative and specialty staff required
- the ratio of staff to campers.

The process of recruitment for new personnel should begin as soon as plans for the coming season have been completed. The experienced director will tell you that the biggest problem encountered in recruiting is the hiring of male staff over 18 years of age. Listed below are a number of solutions to this problem. The degree of their success is dependent upon the specific situation.

Solutions:
- higher salaries
- better selling of actual role of camp counselor
- prestige to job
- train more male junior staff
- explore recruitment possibilites where camp is related to courses being studied
- employ university students (male) for longer periods, by using in administration and maintenance during pre-season period
- participate in university or community college co-op program
- make job exciting and provide adequate on the job training to make it a valuable personal experience.

SOURCES OF STAFF

Some prospective staff members will apply directly to the camp

office without solicitation, but, with the exception of municipal day camps who receive upwards of 400 applicants, these will be only a small percentage of the total number required. In order to fill out your staff every possible source should be explored.

- returning staff—those who are happy will return
- from your training program—these individuals are an excellent source since they have been trained in the specific philosophy and organization of the day camp in question
- referrals—from friends and staff. A note of caution is advised, for the people others like and know aren't necessarily the ones to fulfil the requirements of the position
- organizational camps—may draft staff from other departments or branches
- general advertisement—in the seasonal or part-time help wanted columns
- personal contact with the guidance department of schools
- personal contact with college placement services
- Canada Manpower Centres
- student employment groups
- Ontario Camping Association—publishes a list of those requiring employment and their qualifications
- special interest groups—Audubon Societies, archery clubs, science clubs, etc., may provide counselling or specialty staff
- religious affiliations—through bulletins and publications
- direct solicitation of persons in education and recreation.

SELECTION OF STAFF

The director has the final word on whom he hires to fill his staff. In order for him to be successful he must prepare himself and his prospective employee for the selection process. However, even before he begins, the director must establish in his own mind the philosophy under which camp will operate and attempt to state it in writing for referral and if necessary, change.

Prior to the Interview

It is essential that the director learn as much as possible about the prospective employee and that the employee in return learns about the camp and process to be followed in the interview.

The Application Form

The application form should attempt to gather general information about the applicant's qualifications and provide some insight or clues to his personality. The following should be included on such a form:

- factual information—name, address, telephone, date of birth, present grade or employment
- health statement
- position being applied for
- past experience in camping or working with children
- related work information
- special interest or abilities
- references (preferably camp)
- space for comments about the interview.

References

Every camp director has a responsibility to check the references of every individual he intends to hire as a member of his staff. The enjoyment and the safety of each camper may be in the balance. Most references are primarily useful to establish the validity of what the applicant states, as they are furnished by people referred to the camp by the applicant himself. The best source of reference for camping positions is a previous director at a camp the applicant has attended as a trainee or staff member. Many directors use the reference as an interview tool, compiling the information in advance.

Of the two types of references, personal discussions or form letters, the former is the most revealing. However, the municipal organization which interviews several hundred applicants and the directors of large camps will find the form letter more practical.

When preparing a reference letter it is important to inform the person providing the reference that his observations of the applicant are crucial due to the nature of the position for which the applicant is applying, and that his candid opinion will be held in strictest confidence.

Sample forms may be obtained from the Ontario Camping Association office.

Job Description

In many cases this form is mailed to the applicant in advance of the interview or given to him to read as he waits to be interviewed. In all cases the Job Description should be written. An awareness of the scope of the position for which the applicant is applying will allow him to prepare necessary questions to be asked during the interview and will allow the director to spend their time together gathering pertinent information about his prospective employee.

Job descriptions usually contain information about the following:

- qualifications
- responsibilities of the position
- organization of responsibility (often in chart form)
- available program
- organization of the camp day
- pre-camp training
- regular staff meetings
- salaries
- term of employment.

The following is a sample form used by the Toronto YMCA.

TORONTO YMCA
JOB DESCRIPTION - DAY CAMP COUNSELOR

Basic Function

The counselor's basic responsibility is the personal growth of each camper in his/her group. The counselor utilizes the group setting, together with the natural environment and leadership that consistently demonstrates care and concern for other people, to assist this growth. The counselor utilizes program activities to provide adventure and enjoyment, develop new skills and interests, and satisfy a need for achievement and recognition in the campers.

Authority

The counselor has authority to take necessary action to carry out responsibilties assigned to him within the framework of policies and objectives established by the Toronto YMCA.

Accountability

Is directly responsible to his section director and to program specialists when operating in their area or under their jurisdiction.

Specific Responsibilities

- planning, cooperating and conducting program with his camper group
- supervising camp activities, including participation with other groups
- planning and supervision of campers, during camp special events, such as overnights, parents' nights, etc.
- responsible for the health and safety of each camper
- participating in staff meetings and training events as scheduled
- cooperating with other staff in the organizing and conducting of the camp
- maintaining the campsite and camp equipment and supplies
- maintaining personal behavior of a responsible, exemplary nature
- maintaining neat and clean appearance
- following camp administrative procedures regarding buses, attendance and camper reports, emergency procedures, etc.

Qualifications

- minimum age 16
- experience in day or resident camping or significant related experience
- experience in working with children
- at least one program skill suitable for camp leadership
- emotional maturity
- good health and vitality
- ability to work cooperatively with campers and staff
- joy and satisfaction in working with children
- enjoyment of outdoor living
- willingness to learn.

Term

- the day camp season is June_____ to August_____
- the day camp week is Monday to Friday
- must be available to participate in pre-camp training, staff meetings, overnights special events.

Salary

- $30 - $55 per week, depending upon qualifications.

Statement of Personnel Policy

To some extent these statements are repeated in the written contract offered to the successful applicant at the conclusion of negotiations. However, they should also be provided in writing to all returning staff and applicants, prior to the commencement of interviewing and hiring.

The statement of personnel policy is important because:

- it often clears up many questions that will undoubtedly arise during the interview and thus allows the director to concentrate on the applicant's suitability
- the applicant knows the conditions under which he will be expected to work and what is expected of him
- it assures comparable treatment for all staff and thus strengthens staff morale
- it provides the director with guidelines for administrative decisions
- it tells the staff what the camp will do for them, for in all the negotiations for the position, the director has asked what the applicant will do for the camp.

Although personnel policy necessarily varies from camp to camp the statement usually includes information about the following:

- wages - when, how, deductions
- camp insurance - staff coverage
- transportation - to and from the site
- conditions for dismissal
- termination of agreement
- sick leave
- time off - if any
- rules and regulations
- policy re: trips
- opportunity for advancement.

A copy issued by the YMCA follows:

TORONTO YMCA
A STATEMENT OF PERSONNEL PRACTICES FOR
TEMPORARY STAFF OF THE TORONTO YMCA
DAY CAMP AND SUMMER PROGRAMS
19__

Wages

Wages will be paid by cheque and issued every two weeks, the dates being; July ____ and ____. August____and ____.

Income Tax

The law requires that gross pay be shown on each employee's cheque and T-D slip (By law, gross pay is the amount of cash payment stipulated in the agreement form plus any taxable benefits).

Canada Pension Plan

Deductions for Canada Pension Plan must be made from each employee 18 years of age and over who earns in excess of $600 per year. The amount deducted is 1.8% of the gross pay. This amount can be retrieved by claiming on your 19__ tax claim.

Vacation Pay

All employees are paid vacation pay of 4% of their gross pay, at the end of the employment period.

Unemployment Insurance

The Toronto YMCA does not carry Unemployment Insurance. Therefore this cannot be paid by any member of its summer staff.

Workmen's Compensation

All employees of the Toronto YMCA are covered by the Ontario Workmen's Compensation Act.

Transportation (Day Camp Only)

Transportation to and from camp is provided on the day camp buses. No cars are to be brought to camp except at the request of the camp director.

Termination of Agreement

The summer contract for all temporary staff may be terminated under one of the following conditions by the camp director, or his appointee.

- Insufficient registration of participants: - In the case of a program not receiving sufficient participants to operate, notice of one week will be given to those staff affected by a cancellation of program, and payment made to the end of the employment period.

- Poor performance of staff: - In which case termination notice will be given one week in advance and payment will be to the end of the completed employment period.

- Gross misconduct of staff i.e. intolerable behavior of a major nature. In which case separation would be immediate and payment made to that date.

- Resignation of Staff: - A minimum of one week's notice is expected.

Note: Procedure for terminating employment under first three items will be in consultation with the related staff person, his immediate supervisor, and program supervisor.

Illness and/or Emergency Leave

Should an employee be ill or require emergency leave due to personal or family circumstances, he/she must immediately notify his supervisor. Within reasonable limits, the employee's pay or status will not be in jeopardy.

The YMCA reserves the right to require a health examination by the physician of the YMCA 's choice, and at the expense of the YMCA at any time during the employment period.

Personal Effects

Care will be taken to protect staff property, but the YMCA is not responsible for any personal effects of staff.

Staff Visitors

Employees are requested to discourage friends from visiting them while they are on the job.

Civic & National Holidays

Program will operate July___and August____.

Guidelines for Job Negotiation

Young people are seldom properly prepared for an interview nor do they fully understand the subtleties of the negotiations which will follow. Applicants are usually nervous, unresponsive or blunt and uncommunicative. To ease the situation, to aid the following quality of the interview and to clarify the procedures of the interview, the Ontario Camping Association has developed the following guidelines for job negotiations.

These suggestions have been prepared to assist and advise all applicants in the proper procedures when applying for camp position.

- An oral offer by a director and your oral acceptance, at that time, binds both you and the director. The contract formalizes your arrangements.
- If you wish to consider the offer, find out how soon the director wants a reply. If you take more than the allotted time, the position may then be given to another applicant.
- Once a position has been agreed upon by you and the director, either orally or in writing, it is unethical for you to apply or continue negotiations elsewhere. Other directors, with whom you have been negotiating, should be notified accordingly.
- It is unethical for you to break your contract in order to apply or negotiate elsewhere. However, if your circumstances have unexpectedly changed since the signing of your contract, in a way that would make it impractical for you to attend camp, then you should, without delay discuss the situation with your camp director. He/she will usually offer a solution or release you from your obligation.
- Your application for a staff position may be rejected for many reasons, including one or more of: age, school grade, lack of experience, previous performance at another job, references, your unreasonable salary requirement in view of age and/or experience.

HOW TO APPLY

Obtain as much information as possible regarding the camps in which you are interested (determine which of them would be the best for you, i.e. where you could make the greatest contribution.)

- Make application to the camp(s) of your choice.

- Complete and return the application promptly, make certain that all questions are answered accurately, i.e. age, school, grade, reference etc.
- An interview will be arranged. It may be necessary to allow sufficient time for references to be received.

At the interview, answer questions frankly and ask questions of your own. This is the time to determine whether this is the camp for you. Understand your specific job responsibilities and duties as well as financial arrangements and all camp policies, e.g. bed hours, days off, camp dress, smoking, etc.

Find out those services and/or tangible benefits that the camp will provide as part of the conditions of your employment. i.e. laundry, transportation, recreation, insurance (some of these are taxable benefits.) Ask to see a copy of camp contract. These understandings will help to clarify your relationship with the camp.

Remember that the interview need not be conclusive for either you or the director. Take the time to consider those pertinent details that were discussed during your interview. Do not make a hasty decision. Once your decision has been made to accept the position offered, there should be a written agreement (contract). This agreement should be signed and returned promptly.

It is sincerely hoped that the observance of the foregoing by both staff applicants and camp directors will simplify negotiations for staff positions and improve camping standards.

It should be noted that some very experienced directors in the art of interviewing feel that this type of preparation may spoil the spontaneity they desire while talking to the applicant.

The Interview

What is our goal in selection? What are we trying to do when we interview prospective camp staff? We are attempting to gather enough information about a person to make a predictive statement about his success or failure on the job; in other words a yes or a no.

Remember you are buying this person's services. You are committing your organization to the outlay of funds, so be critical and decisive. There is a risk in all selection procedures. A risk of hiring failures and of rejecting people who might do well on the job. You can only minimize this risk, you cannot eliminate it.

There are three phases in the selection process. We gather the information, we integrate the information and we draw a conclusion based on it. In other words, we find useful information about the candidate, make sense out of it, and come up with a yes or a no which has some logic behind it.

The tool we use for this job is the interview. If we had a simpler and more exact tool we would gladly use it. Interviewing looks pretty simple. Two people sit down, they talk and, as a result of the discussion, decisions are made, information is exchanged. This apparently simple task is actually one of the greatest barriers to improving your skill because it looks so easy.

But the sign of a mature interviewer is his recognition of the difficulty of the job he does. One fact alone is enough to keep you humble. In the space of an hour or so, you attempt to gain an understanding of a lifetime of thousands of experiences. Your candidate's own experience has produced attitudes, motives, patterns of behavior which he can modify slightly or substantially to fit a given situation. So to capture these things takes training,preparation and skill on your part. Without them you have little hope of coming to sound conclusions based on the interview.

Training

The first step in interviewing is training. Unguided practice does not make perfect. You can interview for years and do nothing but perfect your own mistakes. Unless you constantly watch your own technique, correct your methods, increase your understanding of human behavior, there is no particular reason why your skill should improve.

Preparation

Broad preparation implies knowing something about yourself. What about you as part of the interview? How good are you as a maker of judgments about people? Before you try to judge people know yourself. Know your own biases, your own prejudices, your likes and dislikes. These inevitably affect your judgement. So listen to your own thoughts when you see people with faces you don't like, physical handicaps or big smiles. Are you generalizing beyond the information you have? Does the rosy glow of the person's face blind you to his short-comings? Do you go overboard to make allowances for the person who has had a hard life?

Objectivity

This is a word which we all use, but a viewpoint we often neglect. It means putting your own feelings aside for the moment. It means sticking to your standards even though your emotions tell you differently. Remember you must judge whether this is the best person for the job, regardless of how you feel about him, but based on the facts you know.

Preparation goes on right up to the start of the interview itself. Take a look at his application. What does it tell you about the person beyond what he wants you to know? Is it neat or careless in format? Is it wordy or too long? What is his skill with language? What does he want to do? Are the reasons superficial? Does his job history reflect any purpose or direction? So as you prepare, take some notes on the items you want to check out in the interview. If the interview is brief, plan beforehand the areas you want to cover. And make sure you hit the areas that are significant to the job.

Getting Started

As you will know, every person coming to you in the interview has his own set of ideas about what he wants to tell you and what is going to happen. To some extent he may be anxious. And in his state of mind his defences are up. Needless to say while he is at this state, he is not going to tell you the things you want to know. So your first step obviously is to help him relax, to let him know he has nothing to fear and to get across the feeling that you are on a cooperative venture, helping each other to determine if he is the best person for the job.

The best way to set him at ease is to show hospitality. Relax yourself. Treat him with the same respect you give any stranger who is your guest. Put yourself in his shoes. See that the interview room is private and keep yourself free from interruptions. These little gestures help make it clear to him that he is your main concern.

For a start help him handle his uncomfortable feelings by talking about a neutral subject. Pick a topic that interests him. Avoid matters that might cause him to put up his guard. You don't want to drive him behind his defences. And your biggest asset is in showing your sincere interest and respect for him. But don't get tangled up in idle talk because he will probably wonder when you are going to get down to business.

Checking Yourself

Now, you are going to make mistakes because these are inevitable. But learn from them and everytime one of your selections doesn't work out look it over carefully. Where did you miss? Was it insufficient knowledge of the job, or the person? How can you avoid this happening again? Don't just practise your errors. Learn from them.

Interview Topics

Let us discuss briefly some of the things you might cover in a job interview. Work history - look at what he has done, what kind of jobs he has had. What can this tell you beyond what he did and where he did it? The pattern of work tells you very much about his judgement and foresight - learning from experience - skill with people. What part of a job has he liked or disliked? Are these superficial or do they show some depth? How does he go about getting his jobs

and why does he choose them? How did he like his boss and fellow employees? Why did he leave his jobs? Has he held any supervisory position? If so, how did he react to being in charge? Weigh the responses carefully. Do they represent an attraction to frills or do they suggest stability and sense of responsibility?

Education - level of education reflects partly opportunity and partly interest. So why did he drop out of school? What subjects did he like and why?

Then move naturally from a topic in the initial conversation to something you want to talk about in the interview. Select an area he seems willing to talk about. Save the tougher ones until he is accustomed to expressing his feelings to you. During the interview, you are doing many things at once. You are questioning, listening, observing and evaluating.

Questioning

Let's first look at questioning. It seems simple enough, you ask a question and you get an answer. But what kind of answer? Questions that require a simple yes or no don't tell us very much about the person. The best ones are those that require him to tell you something about himself. How did he like school? Were there many things he didn't like? Have there been any problems at home? Don't be afraid to ask why. Let him show you how well he can back up his decisions or his action. This also gives you the opportunity to make sure you understand what he means by what he says. The accuracy of the judgments you make depend on how well you do understand.

Observing

Observing the person you are interviewing is a critical task. It begins when he comes in and continues until he leaves. Look at his neatness and grooming or lack of it. His posture. Do his hands shake and perspire? How long does his tenseness last? Do some of your questions upset him and cause him to blush? Does he recover from it? Can he control his emotions under mild stress?

Listening

As the interview progresses, sit back and listen. Let him tell you his story. It is safe to say that you can judge the quality of the interview by the ratio of talk between interviewer and interviewee. The poorer the interviewer, the more he talks and dominates the interview. So remember you are there to listen, you cannot gather information if you are doing all the talking.

What activities did he get into outside classes? Was he a brain, a party man, or was he just there? Regardless of how much education he had, what did he learn from it?

Leisure time— Now let's turn to another topic which can give you a view of the persons's leisure time. What does he do when he is away from school or work? Why does he choose these things? How much time do they take up? Do they suggest any leadership ability? Does he read outside of his school or work area? Could his leisure activity suggest any supplementary job skill?

Health—The person's health is often a good source of attitudes about himself. Naturally you limit your questioning to things you are equipped to handle. Leave the medical questions to the physician. But ask about the extent of his absences due to sickness, whether he is under medical care at the present time. Ask him how his health is. And beware, if his response is a long list of medical complaints. Do you have any trouble getting him off the subject? Is he overly sensitive about real physical handicaps?

Family—Health, job history and education, fit very comfortably into the interview. Family and personal life however require a maximum of sensitivity and tact if you are to avoid annoying, offending or invading the person's privacy. Let him tell you. So at this stage of the interview, assuming that you have not been acting like a prosecuting lawyer you have shown him your interest in and acceptance of him as a person. If he feels you respect him then he will discuss these with you.

What social activities does he enjoy? Does he have any debts? What does he look for in his friends? Can he talk comfortably about people beyond the common clichés? Why does he want the job? And what contribution can he make in the job situation?

Review—Before you complete the interview, review the information you have. Take a look to see if there are any inconsistencies that you haven't resolved to your satisfaction.

One way of doing this is to summarize with the person the facts that the two of you have gathered. Make sure that you have a chance to understand what he has told you. Human beings are more complex than what might be simply inferred from a statement without asking why or how. Simple words can sometimes be the most ambiguous. And once you probe the meaning behind the simple clichés you will never again neglect to follow them up.

Closing— Now this brings us to the last point. How do you end it? Some people are not going to stop talking, or want to stop talking. First give him any information he needs. Don't close it with him hanging in mid-air. Having done this, answer any other questions briefly and excuse yourself for the next appointment. Don't leave it up to the applicant to decide when the interview is going to end. A gentle reminder that the time is up, and rising from your chair is generally enough.

We have reviewed briefly some of the basic aspects of interviewing. The most important factor is the interviewer himself. A relaxed manner is important. You must never forget that the candidate's behavior in the interview is strongly influenced by your own. If you are distant and detached, the other person is likely to appear shy, retiring, too serious, etc. The actions you observe are partly a product of your own actions. Most people are more than happy to tell you what they think you want to hear.

Fundamentally it is you who make or break the interview; your curiosity about differences among people, your belief in their worth, and your ability to understand yourself as part of the interview.

The purpose of this talk is to focus the attention of people responsible for the selection of camp staff on the interviewing process. It emphasizes the need for training, preparation, and the important [illegible]ors in the interview situation. Also covered are such matters as interview t[illegible], subjects for conversation, making sense out of the information collected a[illegible] importance of the interviewer's own attitude and biases.

The Contract

A written and signed contract is the confirmation of the agreement between the staff member and the organization. It should be presented to the applicant immediately after the decision to retain his services is reached. Two copies of the form should be made up. Both should be signed by the applicant and returned to the director who will then sign them and send one off to the applicant. This is also an appropriate time to have other forms, such as the T4 Exemption form, signed and returned by the applicant.

Some contracts are very short and precise, while others go into a great deal of explanation. Both have their advantages and disadvantages; however, no matter the type of contract the following information should be included.

- name of the applicant
- position
- duration of employment
- salary and explanation of vacation pay
- responsibilities that the applicant will assume
- responsibilities the camp will assume
- signature of the applicant
- signature of the director.

Staff Training

The selection process is important and if followed through to its conclusion will provide the camp with a group of individuals who have the necessary qualities to become good staff members. This vast potential, however, may not be sufficient to produce a successful camp.

A staff must be able to work together as a unit to achieve the aims and objectives as outlined by the director. It must know and understand the behavior patterns of young children. It must be aware of the methods of motivating and making each experience meaningful and enjoyable for the campers. It must know how to care for the camp age child. These are not things that an individual reads and knows but rather he must be trained and experienced in these fields.

The camp director has an obligation to his staff and to his campers to see to it that his training program is an on-going process from the time he begins to hire his staff, to pre-camp and during the camping season. It should be followed by an evaluation and discussion in order to improve the techniques for the next summer. Even the most experienced members of the staff including the director can learn new ideas and reinforce old ones.

The training program must be well planned and will necessarily differ from camp to camp. Included in this segment of Book II are many training ideas used successfully in established day camps.

STAFF MANUAL

Not all camps present their staff with a fully prepared staff manual. However, most do hand or send out individual articles of interest, programming ideas, forms and other pertinent information to their staff. Whether in manual form or not, there is a value to placing reference material in hands of the staff. Often the distributed material covers information about the following topics, and these may be put together to form a manual;

- history of camp
- philosophy
- aims and objectives
- organizational chart
- rules and regulations
- materials available at camp
- forms of training, pre-camp, in camp

transportation for staff and campers
emergency procedures
information being distributed to parents
parents' nights
programming--the process
-essentials of good programming
-special programs
-rainy days
specialty programs
evaluations
characteristrics of different age groups
articles of interest
list of reference books and where they may be found.

PRIOR TO CAMP TRAINING

Job Orientation

The purposes of job orientation are:

- to provide the staff member with relevant information about the camp, its community, its constituents
- to help the staff member understand the nature of his job and his functions in relation to other staff members
- to establish the basic patterns of supervisory relationships
- to help the staff member become established in the camp and to aid him in developing a sense of ease and security in his work with the rest of the staff
- to provide the camp director with additional insights about staff members.

For most day camps, pre-camp training events provide the major opportunities for job orientation. However, many camps do have meetings at the office or camp site to which applicants and returning staff are invited to ask and answer questions, to see slides or movies of preceding summers and to go over material provided concerning the camp, its philosophy and its regulations.

Meetings

There are usually a minimum of two or more meetings held a few months prior to the opening of camp for administrative staff of the camp, the director, program director specialists and section heads. Many of the following topics pertaining to preparation for the coming summer are discussed and decisions made.

- revision of manual and forms
- an outline of the specialty programs
- general camp organization
- mass or special programs--including rainy days
- reference books--their availability
- pre-camp format
- responsibilities during pre-camp.

Correspondence

The staff at a day camp are primarily of high school or university age making meeting times very limited. To overcome this handicap to some extent, the experienced director keeps his staff informed by letter and regularly published bulletins which include

- names of returning staff
- plans for the coming summer and how they are progressing
- pre-camp organization
- reference materials
- program ideas.

OCA Conference

For information concerning counselor and administrative sessions contact the Ontario Camping Association office

Workshops

Many camps offer their staff an opportunity to meet together at various times during the year, holidays, or weekends to discuss and work at specific areas of camp life included in the day camp program. These sessions may be conducted by the director himself, returning staff or guest specialists. At one day camp in the Toronto area, the staff is invited to spend a winter weekend together at the camp's main lodge to mix work with pleasure and prepare themselves for the coming camping season.

From time to time the Ontario Camping Association sponsors through its members various workshops, some of which may pertain to day camping. Information concerning these workshops can be obtained from the Association's office.

Pre-Camp Training Methods and Topics

The essential first step in developing a training plan is to determine the objectives for training, i.e. the results you hope to achieve. Training objectives are set both by the camp and the staff. They are not set democratically, but by the process of collaboration and negotiation. They are more likely to be realistic when the staff are involved in assessing their own training needs, or at least can accept the objectives as having significance for them.

The objectives determined will be in one or more of these areas:

change in things known, or KNOWLEDGE
change in things done, or SKILLS
change in things felt, or ATTITUDES
change in things valued, or APPRECIATION
change in things comprehended, or UNDERSTANDING

Once you have determined the training objectives you may move to choosing the most appropriate training methods. Note the following example which is taken from "Teaching Adults in Informal Courses", by Malcom S. Knowles, (Association Press, N.Y. 1954)

REFER TO CHART ON PAGE 22

Remember

At this point it would be wise to sketch out a general plan for the event. The plan should be as specific as possible and should include these headings:

- agenda item
- specific objective (for that item)
- time allowance
- place
- materials and equipment required (if any)
- content
- methods to be used
- persons responsible.

All of these elements must be appropriately related to one another. Evaluation of the event should be built into the training plan allowing you to determine the success of the event and to point the way to additional training needs and future events.

MATCHING METHODS TO OUTCOMES IN TERMS OF KINDS OF CHANGE

Type of Behavioral Change	Most Appropriate Methods
KNOWLEDGE (Generalizations about experience: the internalization of information)	Lecture, panel, symposium Reading Audio-visual aids Books-based discussion
INSIGHT and UNDERSTANDING (The application of information to experience)	Feedback devices Problem solving discussions Laboratory experimentation Exams and essays Audience participation Case problems
SKILLS (The incorporation of new ways of performing through practice)	Practice exercises Practice role-playing Drill Demonstration Practicum
ATTITUDES (The adoption of new feelings through experiencing greater success with them)	Reverse role-playing Permissive discussion Counselling-consultation Environmental support Case method
VALUES (The adoption and priority arrangement of beliefs)	Biographical reading and drama Philosophical discussion Sermons and workshop Reflection
INTERESTS (Satisfying exposure to new activities)	Trips Audio-visual aids Reading Creative Arts Recitals, pageants

A word about content and topics to be covered may be important here. Each camp may, because of its own unique situation, include topics at its pre-camp sessions that are only relevant to its operation; however, below is a list of topics that have been included in many of the sessions held for private, agency, and municipal day camps.

Topics

Philosophy
Staff meetings
Parent contact
Behavioral problems
Discipline
Transportation
Forms
Reports
Lost and found
Reference materials
Staff recreation
Program planning
Food/cooking
Typical day
Special events
CIT program
First day program
Specialties
Swim program
Games—quiet—active
Rest/quiet period
Storytelling
Rainy days
Overnight/overdays
Out-trips
Music
Singsongs
Archery
Drama
Campcraft
Canoeing
Nature lore
Nature craft
Water skiing
Sailing
Horseback riding
Art and crafts

IN-CAMP TRAINING

Staff Meetings

Staff meetings are a necessity of any camp. They allow:

- discussion of common problems
- organization of special programs
- programming for a specific time period (1 day, 1 week)
- passing on of information from the administration
- socializing.

The social aspect of these meetings should not be underestimated. As the staff members get to know each other they tend to relax and become more communicative. Consequently, they work well together providing a cohesive unit so evident in a successful camp.

Unlike the resident camp situation where the staff is always available for meetings, the day camp organization presents a great obstacle. Only a very few day camps are located in the centre of an area they are serving, thus the staff must share the transportation with the campers, often making camp meetings difficult.

Most camp directors recognize the necessity for holding regular meetings (at least one per week) and have hurdled the obstacle in various ways.

- hold regular evening meetings at an accessible location
- let each section arrange its own meeting times
- have one overnight per period per section and have the meeting at that time
- meet during swim periods
- have the specialist cover the groups while the sections meet
- have a sufficient number of staff leave on each bus; detain the rest for section meetings; have one bus return with the staff who accompanied the children home in time for a camp wide meeting; have the returning bus take the entire staff to central locations in the city (supper is usually provided at these meetings).

From the aforementioned it is evident that not all camps have an opportunity to meet together en masse. However, successful directors will be quick to point out that they must have time to meet all the staff in a group situation. It is at this time that the director can offer praise and reinforcement to maintain the cohesiveness which has already been pointed to as a definite asset. This last factor should be taken into consideration when a director decides on his meeting format.

Individual Discussions

The camp director and the section heads should include as one of their tasks the direct and indirect observation of each staff member. A meeting of the observer and the staff member should take place informally at a convenient time for the purpose of discussing problems and exchanging information. This is not a time to evaluate or appraise the individual but rather a time when the two begin to know and understand each other so that working conditions may improve.

Internal Movement of Staff

Every camp has a number of individuals who have exceptional camping abilities which should be shared with the rest of the staff. Instead of having this individual perform for the rest of the staff, it is often advisable for him to rotate to another section where he can demonstrate his skill to staff and campers alike in a real setting. His group or specialty is covered by auxiliary personnel or administrative staff.

Demonstrations

The staff often becomes bored when the same individuals are constantly called on to pass on information. To avoid this problem and add some life to presentations, different groups, sections or specialty staff are approached to prepare and demonstrate a certain aspect of camp life for the entire staff.

Use of Reference Materials

Every camp should have a growing reference library from which staff and trainees are encouraged to borrow frequently. The library should contain:

- purchased books
- borrowed books (from public libraries)
- programs used previously in your own camp
- information presented at training sessions over the years
- camping publications--the Canadian and American Camping Associations publish quarterly magazines.

With day camping growing at a fantastic rate there are numberous books available on the subject. If, as in the case of municipal camps which have many different sites, it is impractical to purchase large numbers of books, the local branch of your public library will have or can be encouraged to have a number of publications on hand.

EXAMPLES OF STAFF TRAINING

Municipal Day Camp (a case study)

Pre-Pre-Pre Camp Training

General: Directors and assistants to OCA conference if possible.

Specific: Information given at a general meeting to all new persons who have applied for counselling or CIT positions—salary, duties, personal and character requirements, locations of camps, type of program, etc. The purpose is to pre-answer questions which might be asked at interview and to let everyone know the facts so that non-interested people can cancel their interviews (as a municipal body, we must interview all who apply—number for day camp is often 400-600).

Information given to interviewers re. qualities looked for, questions asked, evaluatory procedure, etc. (includes apparent enthusiasm, knowledge, experience, scholastic ability, alternate summer plans, solutions to hypothetical problems etc.)

COUNSELOR TRAINING

Day Camp General Meeting

Pre-Pre Camp Training

For all persons hired—directors, assistants, nurses, counselors.
At this time the following are detailed:

- position titles
- general and specific (where possible) responsibilities (written)
- extent and limitations of authority
- policies
- training
- evaluation

A motivational talk on counselling, programming, or the camper is given. Camp assignments are made and specific camps set own dates for meetings.

CIT Meeting

For all persons contracted as CIT's. Same general program as meeting outlined above.

Directors' Meetings

Approximately five meetings held between May 1, and June 30. These involve administrative staff, coordinator, science consultant, directors, assistants.

Instruction and discussion re:

- directors' manual (policies, procedures, forms etc.)
- day camp notations (do's and don'ts at a glance)
- program ideas
- plans for directors' workshop and staff training
- CIT training
- supplies (actual, additions, etc.)
- swim schedules
- bus routes
- theme policy
- staff and public relations.

Day Camp Directors' Workshop

For all directors and assistants. Purpose to refresh the experienced, to familiarize the new (to day camping).

All instruction is given by group members, if possible; includes:

- types, formats of opening and closing exercises
- sessions on campcraft, nature, games, nature crafts, archery, arts and crafts
- Indian council (includes preparation--fire, paint, circle, costumes, lines etc.)

Nurses' Meeting

Information of duties, hours, forms standards, procedures etc.

Pre Camp Training

Involves everyone but CIT's and nurses - 3 days, immediately before camp starts. Campsite, building, pool used.

Day 1 (Thursday)

All new staff arrive at campsite in morning

- morning is spent in groups of 10 receiving instruction re skills and methods of instructing campcraft, archery, on site.

Afternoon is spent at nearby collegiate and includes:

- lectures and discussion on teaching techniques, program planning and special events (weekly, daily); lecture, discussion, brainstorming and short actual participation in planning and executing games (active, and quiet, mass)
- recreation swim at adjacent pool
- back to campsite for barbecue
- group discussions on phychology, behavior, policy
- preparation for overnight
- Indian council
- campfire program..

In addition to the obvious benefits of this overnight such as spirit, extra teaching time, good observation period for administrative staff and directors, it is an excellent lesson for those staff who have never slept out before or have never had to undergo the rigors of a full day following the sleepout. They then know how important it is to preserve themselves and their campers on the actual overnights following.

Day 2 (Friday)

Staff (new) who have slept overnight cook breakfast, clean campsite, are bussed to pool for shower, swim, then assemble in collegiate with:

- old staff (who come today for the first time); all are in uniform
- morning spent in leadership workshop, old and new meet in small groups for discussion (based on questionnaire) in philosophy of day camping, the camper's viewpoint, leadership-concept and technique
- all back to camp for lunch (in camp groups), book display.
- group (about 25 per) instruction: on nature crafts, nature projects and display,

nature hikes and trails, music, drama, rainy day program.

Day 3 (Saturday)

Staff go to own campsite (except nurses). Day includes attention to:

- group (child) assignments
- rountines and responsibilities (re: swimming, garbage, bus, openings, distribution of milk, mass games, emergencies, etc.)
- tour camp boundaries
- tents and areas in order
- equipment shack (contents, order)
- first day procedures (T shirts, visitation to nurse, etc.)
- collection of programs (for first week).
- review of youth camper visitation policy

AGENCY DAY CAMP

Counselor Training in YWCA (a case study)

In general training sessions we attempt to make the best of our resources covering the following topics:

- YWCA philosophy of day camping
- first aid
- swimming supervision and games
- role of counselor
- group development
- theory of ages and stages
- undertaking the needs of children
- behavior problems
- program planning
- skills-campcraft, nature lore, games, dramatics
- cookouts
- overnights
- supervision.

In the specific training area, the individual day camp director determines the content of her training. She is concerned with the site and the community in which her campers live. She will look after such topics as:

- the community
- specific needs of her campers
- development of program
- transportation
- swimming facilities
- camp procedures-rules, schedules, etc.
- record writing

- supervision
- rainy days
- staff members.

In monthly meetings, which are held from September to May, the day camp directors receive training in the set-up of day camp. Once they have hired all their staff they review the qualifications of each member, and begin to plan the type of general training they will have.

The chief concern of all directors is to develop a staff team. Dividing training and sharing resources makes this difficult. The size of the camp staff ranges from 12 to 25.

PRIVATE DAY CAMP (a case study)

At our camp we have been fortunate in having a large number of staff return each year. We usually fill our vacancies from our CIT program and aim to have our full staff hired by the end of January. Our staff is quite small, about 34 members. At camp we have a winterized log cabin with a bunkhouse. We hold a winter resident weekend with evaluation discussions on camp operation. What went wrong? How can we change it ? What worked?

We also spend several hours examining some interesting case studies of occurrences at camp. All the specialists are given an opportunity to explain their plans for the coming summer. Recreation includes skiing, skating, tobogganing, snowmobiling and snow sculpting.

A second resident weekend is held in early May. We usually bring in guest specialists in art, crafts, nature, or first aid. At this session the counselors have an experience in preparing their own meals from a variety of foods, all outdoor cooking, of course.

Our third session is four or five days long, also held at camp. During this time we concentrate on developing skills in various areas, canoeing, swimming, arts and crafts, campcraft. The counselors are divided according to the age groups they will be counselling.

Their aim will be to develop specific skills to be used as tools in helping the camper have an enjoyable summer. The camp specialists and the directors handle most of these sessions, with an occasional guest lecturer. This session may be resident or the staff may commute daily.

We have the staff directly involved in camp planning. They must be aware of what their exact job is. We hope they will emerge with a feeling of belonging and of being a definite, important part of the camp.

CIT PROGRAM

Many books have been written on this subject and every camp with a CIT program has a different approach. It is agreed, however, that the counselor-in-training program is not established to have extra personnel on hand, but rather as a leadership program geared to the young teenager, too old to be a camper and too young to be a staff member, to help him cope with the responsibilities and problems that confront the camp counselor.

The most important step to take when embarking on this program is to establish clearly a statement of aims and objectives. They should be written down so that the person who is to lead the program may fully understand what is expected of him. This may help to determine if his ideas are compatible with the statements. Before accepting any registrations or applications, the statement should be made available to clear up any misunderstandings. Many successful camps operate their programs with the following aims and objectives in mind:

- to acquaint the CIT with characteristic behavior patterns of camp age children
- to acquaint the CIT with program ideas and to demonstrate the proper techniques in research of new ideas
- to prepare the CIT to present new projects games, songs, skits, etc. to camp age children
- to prepare the CIT to cope with various discipline problems which may arise in the camp situation and to give him a fund of information and techniques which may be applied to each of these situations
- to prepare the CIT to work in all the specialty areas of camp
- to prepare the CIT to work with other people in the most effective way within the camp program

To accomplish all of the above, the CIT needs the guidance of an experienced individual who is observant, tactful, sympathetic, responsive, knowledgeable, enthusiastic and communicative. The leader must be free from all other camp responsibilities except those which are directly associated with the CIT program. He must devote his efforts to the group individually and collectively.

The method of obtaining CIT's for the program often affects the outcome. The CIT who pays a whole or reduced fee often expects campers' privileges and will not accept responsibility. CIT's who register in a program and pay a fee are not screened and in some cases they are not mature enough to cope with or handle young children. On the other hand, the CIT who has applied and has been accepted often expects staff privileges. These problems must be anticipated prior to the opening of camp so that the leader may dispel any misconceptions at his first meeting with the group.

A further complication to the program is the length of time it is expected to cover. A 14 year old may be in the program for two or three summers whereas, a16 year old registering for the first time will be with the program only one year. Again the director and leader must establish the progression of the program before it gets underway.

There are two phases to the training process; the practical phase and the theoretical phase. Both are important in the final outcome. The practical phase is handled in many ways at different camps. Generally the CIT is placed with a group or specialty for half of each day or three days of the week or some other combination. He is asked to plan and carry out some of the programming during his stay with the group. The counselor or specialist and CIT leader observe and appraise his performance verbally and in writing. All criticism must be positive and constructive in nature. At the end of the summer the CIT is given a complete appraisal of his abilities as a potential staff member and the written report is filed as reference.

The practical phase in itself is most important. However, the theory behind it is essential for the proper development of the individual. Getting the theoretical information together is not a particularly difficult task, but presenting it effectively is. A number of methods used in successful programs are briefly outlined.

- assign short and long term projects to the CIT's
- have open discussions about experiences and problems that arose during a practical phase. Try to get the group to decide how they would have handled each problem
- establish workshops in different aspects of camp life
- have the members of the group prepare demonstrations of a specific aspect of camp life to illustrate realistically what is happening
- have the CIT keep a notebook up to date on:
  - ways to motivate
  - low organizational games
  - marching songs
  - program ideas
  - etc.
- bring visiting speakers to the campsite to work with or talk to the CIT's
- have a large number of reference books available and ask for book reports at regular intervals
- have the camp specialists meet with the group to outline and justify their program
- use the ideas outlined in staff training in this manual.

For this type of program to be successful every step must be well planned and the needs of the CIT's taken into consideration. The counselor-in-training is the best source of your future staff since he has been trained under the influence of your philosophy.

Supervision

The purpose of any program of supervision is to determine if the program being carried out in the camp is in agreement with the philosophy of the camp. To insure this, the staff must fully understand aspects of the camp philosophy. Supervision is the explaining of this philosophy to the staff and assisting them in carrying it out. If staff members are not aware of what is required of them they can hardly be expected to carry out their duties to the satisfaction of the directors. Once the counselors appreciate the aims of the director, there are many ways of determining if they carry them out. The counselor's program is probably the most important area for supervision. It can be done in several ways.

Consultation, Discussion and Evaluation

Communication between the staff and directors is of utmost importance. This can be done during staff meetings in which both parties make an honest effort to improve the program through discussion and evaluation. With this method the director calls the staff to him when he feels there is some area that needs attention.

Personal Help

Perhaps more can be accomplished on an individual basis if the counselor comes to the director of his/her own free will. This type of supervision is possible only when the counselor feels that the director is genuinely interested in giving help. If a counselor feels that there is some stigma attached to admitting a mistake or a problem then not many will be volunteered.

Indirect Observation

A very accurate picture of how a counselor is handling his/her campers and the degree to which he or she is carrying out a suitable program can very often be determined by observing...

- campers -- Are they enjoying themselves?
- are they wandering around unattended?
- are they engaging in an interesting activity?
- is it always the same?
- do they listen and obey simple instructions?

Direct Observation

Many things can only be supervised by the direct observation of the activity of the counselor. The method should not be overdone particularly in your relationships with counselors. It is absolutely necessary at some times. There are two areas of direct observation:

- the proposed program—rainy days etc.
- the actual program.

These sometimes do not coincide. If indirect observation indicates it, direct observation may be necessary to determine what is causing the problem.
The next areas can probably best be supervised by direct observation followed by personal or group discussion. It is important to establish that the director can give help and that this help will be given without benefit of audience.

Evaluation

Purpose

Camping has many benefits to offer staff as well as campers. A staff member must constantly take stock of his experiences and evaluate his role as a leader in the camp setting in order to reap these benefits and allow the campers to take full advantage of their time at camp.

Self-evaluation, although very useful, is limited in value for people do not see themselves as others do; thus a system of evaluation or appraisal should be developed by a supervisor in conjunction with the counselling staff. The purpose of the system would be:

- to stimulate the staff member by helping him to a better understanding of himself
- to provide the camp administration with a clear picture of the staff member in order to make appropriate assignments of responsibilities in the future.

The Process

All appraisals should be written either anecdotally or on a prepared form and delivered orally. The staff member should be given an opportunity to reply orally and if he desires, in writing. The evaluation process is not designed to pick a person to pieces, nor is it an opportunity to reform him. It is a process in which the staff member and supervisor participate informally, confidentially

and objectively. It should be entered into by the staff member in a spirit of "How am I doing my job as others see it, and how can I improve on it?" The supervisor, director or section head, should undertake it in the spirit of "What are the main strengths and weaknesses of this staff member in respect to his job, and what can I say to him that will help him to improve, in a way that he can accept?" Both parties must strive for frankness and objectivity. The supervisor must also realize he is dealing with a human being and that praise must be expressed where it is due.

When and Where

In many established camps there are two or three evaluation periods during the summer so that the individual being appraised may have a chance to act on the criticisms and hear about their degree of success. All evaluation forms are then filed to be used as reference. The place that the evaluation dialogue is held will vary from individual to individual. Some people wish to be away from the centre of camp, on a walk or in a canoe, while others prefer the confines of an office. However, they all agree that it should take place in private where there will be no interruptions.

Forms

There are three types of forms on which an individual may be appraised:

- on a sheet of paper having only the name and position of the staff member. The supervisor fills in the rest.
- an anecdotal form with headings as a guideline to writing the report. For example:
  - reaction of campers
  - cooperation
  - responsibility
  - participation in camp programs etc.
- prepared form on which the supervisor checks off the qualities of the individual that have been observed.

Of the three types the first two are the most suitable. For suggested outlines of these forms contact the Ontario Camping Association.

SUMMARY

The importance of the camp staff cannot be over-emphasized. Staff keeps the camp organization moving and gives the director peace of mind. It must be remembered that a good staff is not just hired, it is developed-developed by the efforts of the director in his training system. If his camp is to be successful and provide a good learning experience for both campers and staff, he must spend a great amount of time in preparation.

Further Reading

Camp Counseling by Mitchell, A. V. & Crawford, I. B. Saunders, Canada, 1955

The Camp Counselor's Book by Northway, M. L. & Lowes, B. G. Burgess (McAinsh, Canada), 1963

A Camp Counselor's Manual--Revised by Ledlie, J. A. & Holbein, F. Association (Welch, Canada), 1958

How to Be A Modern Leader by Frank, L. K. Association (Welch, Canada), 1954

How to Develop Better Leaders by Knowles, M. S. Association (Welch, Canada), 1955

New Understandings of Leadership by Ross, M. G. & Hendry, C. E. Association (Welch, Canada), 1957

New Ways to Better Meetings by Strauss, B. Viking (Macmillan, Canada)

Recreation Leader's Handbook by Kraus, R. McGraw-Hill, Canada 1955

Solving Camp Behaviour Problems by Doherty, J. K. Association (Welch, Canada) 1940

So You Want To Be A Camp Counselor by Ott, E. Association (Welch, Canada), 1946

Supervision --New Patterns and Processes by Williamson, M. Association (Welch, Canada), 1961

The Supervision of Group Work and Recreation by Dimock, H. S. & Trecker, H. B. Association (Welch, Canada)

Understanding Girls by Moser, C. Association (Welch, Canada), 1957

There are additional books on this topic, some of which are out of print or are distributed by American publishers who do not maintain Canadian representation. Access to such books may often be gained at local public libraries or in the personal libraries of individuals associated with camping.